



The Bell Ringer



Volume 52, Number 1

September 11, 1996

Nashville, Tennessee

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John Bennett: 1933 - 1996

By Robert Ross and Raja Gaudipati



Johnny Bennett was born on September 2, 1933 in Nashville. In 1951, he graduated from Duncan High School on 25th Avenue North next to Dudley Field. Bennett was small in stature but had incredible instincts on the athletic field. While Bennett was at Duncan, he was a three sport all-star and the lead bowler of the Duncan High School athletic program. Bennett made the Duncan football hall of fame despite the fact that he played only one complete season. As a senior, he made touchdown runs of 50, 80, 40, 70, and 50 yards before suffering a season-ending injury. In basketball, Bennett holds the Duncan High scoring record with a 34 points per game average. He received All-City honors as point guard on a team that won few games. Baseball was Johnny's best sport, and he set a school record as pitcher with 15 strike-outs in 6 innings. Bennett was so crucial to the team that when he wasn't pitching, he was snagging balls in the outfield. Johnny was president of the 1951 Nashville Interacholastic Tennis Championship, because he only played for kicks. Headmaster Duncan wrote, "He was one of the best all around athletes in the history of Duncan School."

After graduating from high school, Johnny Bennett enrolled at Vanderbilt University. There, he was a member of the Commodore baseball team and Summer League MVP. Upon graduating from Vanderbilt with an engineering degree, Mr. Bennett had a brief stint in the army and then worked for the state as an engineer. After a short career as a banker, Mr. Bennett's teaching and formal coaching career began at MBA in 1959, the same year he married his wife, Clara. From BGA, he went to Rome, Georgia in 1961 to teach and coach at Darlington School.

Finally in 1983, Mr. Bennett came to MBA, his home for the next 33 years. Almost as soon as he arrived, Mr. Bennett took the reins of the Big Red baseball and basketball teams. As coach of the baseball team, Mr. Bennett captured region titles in 1987, 1989, and 1995. Mr. Bennett also guided the Big Red basketball team to five region championships, amassing over 200 wins during his career. For his success in basketball, Mr. Bennett was awarded 3 coach of the year awards, including NBA coach of the year in 1980. In addition to coaching, Mr. Bennett served as MBA's athletic director for over 20 years, overseeing a time of substantial success and expansion of the athletic program. Under his watch, MBA captured the Pepsi Cup (awarded to the most successful sports program in the state in each class) in '91 and '93 and finished second in '92 and '94.

Not only a presence on the field, Mr. Bennett, a math teacher his entire career, also was a leader in the classroom. At a recent faculty meeting, Mr. Poston, a longtime friend of Mr. Bennett's, said, "I hope each of us... will have the same caring, compassionate attitude that Mr. Bennett had." He was the chairman of the Discipline Committee, which he helped to create.

Mr. Bennett was also a sponsor of the service club for several years and a chaperone on 8th grade summer Amtrak trips. Mr. Bennett will be sorely missed. Mr. Gioia says, "For over thirty years, Johnny was a mainstay at Montgomery Bell Academy. He was a great teacher, a successful baseball and basketball coach, and really the dean of athletic directors in prep schools throughout this state." Jamie Tillman, Mr. Bennett's successor, adds, "John Bennett gave his life to Montgomery Bell Academy. His love for the kids and his coaching and teaching ability were really what Montgomery Bell Academy is all about. He will be missed." Mr. Bennett's legacy will live on through his students. Alumnus Chip Endrich '86 says, "He was a man of integrity and honor. He loved MBA dearly. I am very proud to say that he was my baseball coach, and I am honored to have had an opportunity to play on a field that now so rightfully bears his name in his honor."



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New Faces On Campus



Dr. John Barrow- Dr. Barrow attended Davidson College for his B.A. in history and completed his Ph.D. in history at Vanderbilt. Dr. Barrow's wife is an attorney at Bass, Berry, and Sims, and he has worked with a number of local debate teams. He will teach 7th and 8th grade history, and serve as the advisor for the yearbook.



Mr. Dick Klausner- A '73 graduate of MBA, Mr. Klausner earned a B.A. in English from Vandy and M.A. in Comparative Literature from UC-Irvine. He will be teaching 9th and 10th grade English and coaching soccer.

Mr. James Tillman
Profiled on page 7



Mrs. Mildred Tilley- Mrs. Tilley will be returning to MBA after an eleven year absence to serve as the Assistant Librarian. She has a B.A. in English and an M.A. in Library Science from Emory University.

Mr. David Brown- After teaching in the Dickson County School System for over 20 years, Mr. Brown has come to the junior school to teach 7th and 8th grade history and coach football. He received his undergraduate degree from David Lipscomb and earned an M.A. from Austin Peay. He and his wife have two children.



Mr. John Leach- Mr. Leach worked at the First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt for two years while finishing his divinity degree. A graduate of Davidson with a B.A. in Religion, he will be teaching Government and Modern World History.



Miss Amy Leigh- A graduate of U.V.A. (B.A. Environmental Science) and Johns Hopkins (M.S. Environmental Earth Science and Policy), Miss Leigh will teach Junior School Science and help coach the swim team.



Mrs. Maggie Qian- Mrs. Qian and her family moved to the U.S. from China seven years ago. Both Mrs. Qian and her husband, Roger, had distinguished careers as educators in Shanghai, China. Mrs. Qian has taught all levels of high school math in ten years. She will be teaching Algebra 1 and Algebra 2-Honors, as well as developing a math club.



Mr. Fletch Fletcher- Mr. Fletcher joins the faculty after working a year on dude and cattle ranches in Montana. A graduate of the University of the South and Episcopal High School in Virginia, he will be teaching Junior School Science and working with our outdoor programs.



Mr. Emmett Russell- An MBA Alumnus, Mr. Russell holds a B.A. in English from Rhodes College, worked at Memphis University School for two years as Director of Admissions, and spent last year in the admissions office of Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School. He will teach 7th grade English and is an athletics coach.



Mr. Rod Jemison- Mr. Jemison has a B.A. in English from Morehouse College in Atlanta and an M.A. in English from T.S.U., and spent a year teaching English in Japan. He will be teaching 10th grade English and Forensics in the Junior School and will be working with our community service programs.

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MBA sponsors Habitat project

by Matt Beasley

Earlier this summer, MBA became a sponsor in the Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity's 10th Anniversary build. Steven Markler and William Gilmore got the ball rolling for this project at a Service Club planning committee meeting and assumed a large part of the responsibility during its early stages. They, along with Mr. Weaver, developed a list of alumni who might make contributions to this activity by donating either money or supplies. MBA then teamed with Tad Ware and the Harpeth Hall Key Club officers to begin the task of fund-raising. Many businessmen were eager to assist our project in at least some way, and by mid-August we were ready to begin construction.

The mission of Habitat for Humanity is to make homeownership a reality for families who could not qualify for a mortgage through orthodox channels. Homeowners, chosen from a pool of applicants, repay the costs of their home with long-term, low interest loans. Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit Chris-

tian organization that depends upon volunteers and donations from organizations like MBA. Our project received donations from several sources, the majority of the funding, however, came from MBA and Harpeth Hall alumni and parents. Our



particular house was constructed primarily by MBA and Harpeth Hall students with help from faculty members (such as Dr. Springer, Mr. Killian, Mr. McCormack, Mr. Pruitt, and Mr. Chenery), and carpenters provided by Habitat for Humanity.

Coch. Bowers, Coach Elliott, and the MBA football team were the first volunteers to help with the construction of the house on August 17. By the end of Sunday, August 18, we had completed erecting the walls and the trusses,

laying the roof decking and the shingles, and started on the siding. During the week-end of August 24-25, we completed the siding, the front porch, and the gutters. So far, we have had good turnouts by volunteers; we have received help from the football team, the wrestling team, the cross-country team, and many other MBA and Harpeth Hall students. The project has proven to be a fun time that enticed several students to return for more work. Justin Tatum, Sam O'Connell, Joe Hillis, Will McInnes, Steven Markler, and Matt Beasley have worked

nearly every shift. We have already finished most of the construction on the outside of the home, but we still have some work in the interior and in landscaping. No one worked on the home during Labor Day weekend, but work did resume during the weekend of September 7-8.

We will also work the following Saturday, September 14, and dedication of the house to its new owner, Teresa Griffin, will take place Sunday, September 15.

News Briefs

COMING TO AMERICA (PART I)

MBA welcomed a new foreign exchange student this year, Jascha Zibema from Lubiano, Slovakia, a peaceful, new country which used to be northern Yugoslavia. Jascha is a sophomore, will be starting with the Fibers all year. Jascha plays soccer, enjoys the green-up taste of an Asahi-Banana, and speaks five languages.

COMING TO AMERICA (PART II)

MBA welcomed another foreign exchange student this fall, Marek Visek. Marek, a junior, hails from Uherska - Pribram in the Czech Republic. He will be spending the fall with the Haskays, who also hosted Stefan Sullimar, our German exchange student, last year.

FACULTY LAPTOPS

Thanks to a generous grant from the Joe C. Davis Foundation, every MBA teacher received an IBM Thinkpad 760LX multimedia-capable laptop computer. The IBM's can be used for classroom presentations, in conjunction with several LCD projectors, which were also donated by the Joe C. Davis Foundation.

YAS GOES TO KNOXVILLE

A laudatory ovation goes to Yasuhiko Hasegawa, who attended the Governor's School for the Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, this past summer. Yas, a junior, was one of 150 students chosen to attend the three-week summer program where he specialized in chemistry.

MBA GOES FOR GOLD

MBA alumnus and former Big Red pitcher R.A. Dickey played on the U.S. Olympic Baseball team during the Atlanta Olympic games. Dickey went 2-0 at the Olympics, pitching five complete innings in the U.S.'s 15-3 win over Italy, and a complete game in the U.S.'s 17-1 win over the Netherlands. Dickey led the USA's hope for gold in the semifinal round, but Dickey and his U.S. teammates won the bronze medal by defeating Venezuela. Former MBA student Jeremy Kane, who has been training in California for the past two years, just missed qualifying for the Summer Games, finishing 9th in the 600-meter free style at the Olympic Trials.

MS. HENSLEY FIGHTS BREAST CANCER

Ms. Janet Hensley, MBA's Director of Admissions, underwent treatment for breast cancer at Baptist Hospital during the summer. Her last chemotherapy session was on August 30th. Ms. Hensley is continuing as Director of Admissions and as an Ancient and Medieval History teacher despite her illness. She hopes to overcome all side effects of her treatment within a month of school starting. Due to a variety of factors, the prognosis is very good.

DEBATE TEAM GOES TO NATIONALS

This summer the MBA debaters T. Eddie Sick, Robert Hoss, Russ, Michael Ryan, and Jack Trout, went to Fayetteville, N.C. to attend the N.I.L. National tournament. The debate gods smiled on T. Eddie and Michael as they advanced to elimination rounds finishing 12th in the nation. Trout and Russ were not so lucky, losing several rounds on speed decisions.

SIX SENIORS ARE NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

Brian Elliot, Lee Hainstock, Thomas Little, Tom Mitchell, Brian Shultz, and Mark Yapp were among the 15,000 students named semifinalists nationwide. The six seniors, along with former student Brian Chen, are eligible to compete for a National Merit Scholarship.

Senior initiatives

Teacher checkout before a football game.

Big Little brother events.

Paschall memorial game.

Senior representatives of the Student Council, Class Officers, and Honor Council meet with Mr. Gioia to discuss pressing relevant issues.

Increased student government role in assemblies.

Student input for coaches and teachers.

Senior newsletter.

Chance to initiate for select class meetings independent of faculty to discuss pertinent issues to seniors.

Help March.

Student snack bar.

Term suit after football season chronicling the Big Red's season.

Video game journey held after football season.

Used clothes sale.

Top of Way, seniors vs. juniors.

Senior Privileges Negotiated

by Ann Anamaveth

Recently, senior class president Russell Taber and Student Council President John Buchanan met with Dr. Crowell and Mr. Gioia to discuss some of the concerns of the senior class, especially last year's elimination of AP privileges which allowed students to spend the half day prior to their AP exams off campus. Each year, the senior officers present a list of desired privileges to Mr. Gioia. The process is done anew each year by the senior class.

Mr. Gioia cites student abuse of their time off as the primary reason why the AP privileges were revoked last year, stating, "The reason why we changed it last year was because there was some frustration among a number of us [administrators] that people were not studying during that time." However, Mr. Gioia did say that he would be willing to reconsider his decision for both seniors and underclassmen, "but would like to know what [seniors] would be doing this year as senior leaders of the school." In general, consideration of privileges is based upon the kind of projects (community service, school participation, etc.) undertaken by the senior class. Mr. Gioia stated, "I think most privilege ought to come through leadership... if people show us that they're responsible and can take care of things, then they deserve more privilege."

In order to demonstrate leadership, the senior class officers, Student Council members, and Honor Council members compiled a list of community service/fundraising initiatives in addition to the list of privilege requests (see sidebars on pg. 3 and 8). While Mr. Gioia feels that these initiatives "sound great," he stresses that "it's more important for them [seniors] to be thinking about their roles rather than just a trade off for the AP's."

On Tuesday, August 27, the senior leadership met with Mr. Gioia and presented him the list of initiatives and a separate list of privilege requests. Mr. Gioia agreed to ten requests, denied seven, and postponed a decision on three. Russell Taber, senior class president, said, "I was generally pleased with Mr. Gioia's initial response, and I expect that he will be open to other ideas and requests as the year progresses."

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Tuition: Are you getting your money's worth?

By the Editorial Staff of The Bell Ringer

Such statements as "The budget's too big," or "It's time to cut the pork" are often heard in political circles. Similar cries reverberate across MBA's campus each spring regarding tuition after the registration forms for the following year are mailed home. For 1996-97, the price for a top-notch education and experience at MBA is \$8100, up from \$7900 for 1995-96. In fact, since the 1993-94 year, the tuition has risen \$600 each year. Some students and parents have loved the charge that tuition is skyrocketing out of control. In light of the amount of money involved, we all have to ask ourselves: Just what are we getting for the price and is it all worth it?

Mr. Samuel Jackson, MBA's Director of Finance, claims that the increase in tuition this year is mostly "paying for better faculty resources and technology." Regarding the first of these issues, we support the administration's efforts to both find and recruit the best faculty available. MBA is known across the state as an academically rigorous institution, and much of this reputation comes from the outstanding faculty. We understand that good teaching must come at a price as both salaries and benefits must be paid. The scope of this undertaking is explained in the Montgomery Bell Academy Annual Report: approximately 58.457%, or \$3,417,090 of MBA's total expenditures went toward salaries and benefits for 1994-95. Also, because enrollment has been rising, MBA has hired many new teachers in recent years to maintain an excellent faculty-student ratio. This year the goal necessitated a net increase in four faculty members. In general, the growth in faculty has been reasonable and proportionate to the increases in the student body.

Technology, the second factor, appears more difficult to evaluate. First of all, the Wilson family and the Joe C. Davis Foundation have already done a great deal to aid

the advancement of technology on campus. The Wilson family is solely responsible for the renovation of the library, including the building's computer, while the Davis Foundation has subsidized top-of-the-line laptop computers for the faculty, as well as

just important; it is critical. In the end, if the school makes wise investments in technology, students will be able to avail themselves of a wide variety of opportunities.

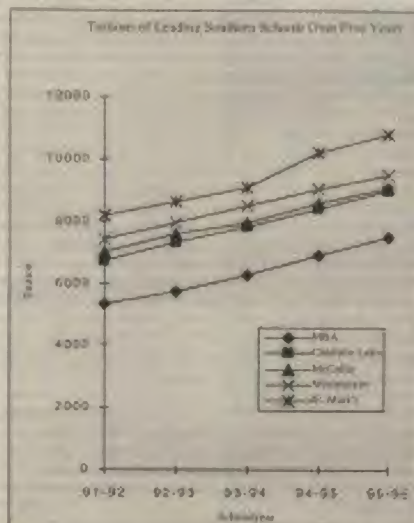
Mr. Gioia also explains that the tuition has to increase for the school to have an aggressive agenda as well

only. MBA's tuition is actually on par with many similarly accredited schools in the South. The Montgomery Bell Academy Annual Report notes that the median tuition for such independent schools was \$6910 (figure has probably enlarged since date of publishing). Many schools even charge significantly more than MBA as well. The Westminster School in Atlanta, for example, is about \$2000 more expensive than MBA, and the McCallie School is about \$1500 more. The St. Mark's School in Texas and Charlotte Latin in North Carolina are also examples of schools that have charged more than MBA in recent years. Although MBA does not offer all of the opportunities found at these highly reputable schools, it is imperative that we focus on what MBA does with its resources. Some of MBA's forces are listed above, and a brief look at the school demonstrates a number of successful extracurricular programs that require intensive funding. Also, even though many schools do charge much less than what MBA charges, a majority of them offer fewer benefits and opportunities as well. Third, Mr. Gioia says that there is enormous pressure on the administration to keep tuition high. The argument from some ends of the spectrum seems to be that to raise the reputation and prestige of MBA to a national level, we must substantially raise revenue through tuition increases. We believe, however, that MBA can distinguish itself with improved programs and opportunities without increasing tuition. MBA can make far-reaching changes by altering its curriculum and regulations, changes that might accommodate our current conditions without necessitating expensive facility changes. Finally, it is important to note that only 65-70% of the education at MBA is paid for by tuition. The rest of the funding comes from the annual giving and the interest from the endowment. This figure is significantly lower than

90%, the common amount in many of the aforementioned leading Southern schools.

Are we locked in an inescapable predicament then? Must tuition increase for the students to have an excellent education at MBA? We think not. The problem could be addressed on two levels. The first involves remembering that money for each student's education comes from three different sources. If we could have more parents, friends, or relatives donate to the annual giving fund, tuition would inevitably reduce its annual rate of growth. Similarly, if the Board of Trustees decided to allot more money from earnings for the endowment, the need for increased tuition would dwindle as well. In fact, a more aggressive set of investments of the endowment by the Board might help to raise revenue. The second way to address the problem would be to reduce the overall operating costs of the school. Inherent in any major institution is bureaucracy, and MBA is no exception. As this factor is a leading cause of need for money, MBA would be well advised to set up a committee to study fiscal allocations and ways to streamline it. For example, MBA could cut costs by further examining wasted electricity and other utilities. Lights, when not in use, should be turned off. Similarly, thermostats across campus could be adjusted by only a degree or so. This idea may sound ludicrous, but when one considers the volume of classroom space, the savings could be thousands of dollars. These ideas are just part, however, of a comprehensive strategy to address the concerns noted above. Any final solution will require more student involvement and better student care of the resources available.

In conclusion, we agree with Mr. Gioia's statement that we do not want to "cut-price" ourselves. If we can find ways to cut down on what we have to pay, should we not take advantage of these opportunities? After all, it is the students and their parents who are left with the final bill.



several projection screens. With all of these donations, one might question the need for further expenditure by the school on technology. However, Mr. Gioia explains that funds for many computers, such as the ones in the science labs, and other technology (as well as expensive maintenance and repair costs) have to come out of the school's own budget. So far, great strides have been made in terms of preparing MBA for the 21st century, particularly in the area of the computer purchases and the Internet. Still, it remains to be seen whether or not the school can allocate its money for technology effectively enough so that all students can benefit. This goal will be difficult, especially when one considers the volatility in the computer market. The students will have a great deal of their resources invested here, so making the right choices for the future is not

As maintain a "healthy operating budget." Little things, such as repainting the trim on the Carter Building and doing repairs inside the Davis Building, do seem to mount and have a significant effect on the cost of running the school. Particularly, as the school expands and its usage grows, the cost to keep everything running smoothly will continue to multiply and will constitute a major expenditure for the school.

When looking at all of these cost-contributing factors, a bit of perspective becomes helpful. First of all, as is noted above, the increase in tuition has been constant for the past several years. This fact might suggest that the school is cognizant of the financial burdens on parents as well as the need to pay for costs; instead of having a quick jump up of \$1000 or \$1500, MBA has made a point to make the changes gradual and consistent. Sec-

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Mr. Gioia identifies MBA's future challenges

The Bell Ringer asked Headmaster Gioia to address the challenges facing MBA in the future, especially the ones he believes to be the major areas of concern and issues related to the students and faculty.

1. **The Physical Plant:** Space is one of the most important issues to all of us at MBA. There are only thirty-five acres on the campus, and we are constantly seeking new places for classrooms, practice fields, gymnasium space, meeting rooms, parking areas, and green space or recreational space both inside and outside of the buildings. It has become increasingly clear that MBA needs more land to meet the needs of its students and the educational programs on the campus. I hope that we will have some success in expanding our campus and finding more places to teach, to study, to enjoy, and to utilize on this campus.

2. **School Mission:** I continue to tell many of you that MBA is indeed fortunate in maintaining a very clear and focused mission. Montgomery Bell Academy offers young men an exemplary college preparatory experience, assisting them to be gentleman, scholars, and athletes. I believe it will become increasingly difficult to maintain the same focus in our mission because of the many demands on individuals and their families and the continued growth in opportunities

for all of us. I am convinced, however, that it is imperative for MBA to keep its mission clear and solid. Our school constituencies marvel at the clarity with which we fulfill our educational goals, and it is clear to me that many people respect the tremendous focus at MBA. At the same time, we must continue to find creative ways to allow individuals to explore their interests and to maintain their commitments to the "gentleman, scholar, athlete" ideals at MBA.

3. **Resources:** MBA is blessed by an abundance of resources—its students, its faculty, its campus, its programs, and its finances. Each year the pressures on the school to maintain the same levels of excellence and competition place greater burdens on all of those resources. In comparison to other independent schools across the country that offer the same kind of programs and benefits, MBA is actually behind in the amount of financial resources we have. I am certainly pleased by the successes of the school in relation to its resources. I suspect, however, it will be even more difficult in the next five years to maintain the same expectation levels without significantly increasing the school's resources, especially in the financial realm.

4. **Competition:** As a school community, MBA likes to compete at the highest levels and to meet those chal-

lenges in all of its programs and opportunities. We will have to continue to balance the expectations of academics, athletics, and other extracurricular programs in all of our arenas.

5. **Looking Beyond MBA:** It seems to me that the school will continue to play an important role in the larger community of Nashville outside of our 4201 Harding Road address. I believe it is important for the school to demonstrate leadership as an educational institution in the city of Nashville. I am convinced that opportunities for service are necessary for all of us at MBA to understand the larger community in Nashville and beyond our city. I suspect that all of us need to examine the changing population within the world around us and to understand the changes in program and environment for different communities. It is essential, I am convinced, for us to know what other institutions do, what other people believe and perceive, and what others feel is important to the patterns and growth of our society.

6. **Student and Faculty Changes:** The growth in our student body has reached a maximum or optimum size of approximately 600. We hope to hold enrollment at 600 over these next five years. In fact, I have worked on a census of our population and a study of the trends I see over the next five years. I know that our faculty and

staff size has increased tremendously over the past few years in order to keep pace with the growth in student population. I suspect that we will continue to examine the number of employees the school has so that we can provide the best service and instruction for all of our community. I also sense that we will have a slight change in the population of both students and faculty in terms of where they come from in the surrounding communities. The city continues to grow in all directions, and I am sure that we will see a change in our demographics.

7. **Technology:** We have been slowly but carefully preparing for changes in technology. The renovation of the library will put us in a position for a number of advances and changes on the campus for teaching, learning, and information services. I would imagine that our students and all faculty and staff will use the computer a great deal more over these next five years. I hope that the computer will facilitate the information needs and provide greater access to information. Our communications with each other on campus and off campus with parents and alumni friends of the school should see some new dimension through the web site, the uses of e-mail, and the expansion of our information systems on the campus.

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Special thanks to Dr. Crowell for helping with photos.

The Bell Ringer is a nonprofit newspaper published for and by the students of Montgomery Bell Academy.

Views expressed in The Bell Ringer do not necessarily represent those of the staff, student body, or school. The opinion of the editorial board is expressed in unsigned editorials.

The Bell Ringer encourages letters to the editor. The letters must be signed, but names will be withheld upon request. The letters may be edited for length.

The staff of The Bell Ringer prepares all type, headlines, and photographs at Montgomery Bell Academy. GCA Publishing in Nashville, Tennessee prints the paper.

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TSSAA changes harm all

by Stephen Marler

I know that I am not alone in my excitement about the beginning of a new school year. That feeling comes more from the impending Friday night football games and Saturday morning cross-country meets than anything else. The sheer devotion and focus of all that drive our students to such heights of athletic prowess astound me. I have no doubt that this year of MBA athletics will not disappoint me.

Unfortunately, the all-out competition between high schools that Tennessee athletes have benefited from will be coming to a close soon. I believe that the TSSAA has done a great job in the past of facilitating competition. The radical shifts involved in TSSAA's scholarship policy changes are not in the best interests of all involved. After all, the TSSAA helped to produce Olympic-caliber

athletes such as Anfernee Hardaway, Ramon Clay, Charlotte Gundry, Margaret Gross, and R.A. Dickey. Current MBA students have also benefited. Trend-setters such as R.A. Dickey have paved the way for athletes such as Scott Denbe, Michael Higgins, Michael Godwin, and Matt Garrett, to name a few. All of these people have thrived under the intense competition between public and private schools that the TSSAA has provided for them. The success of Tennessee secondary schools in producing excellent athletes is shown by the eight of college coaches recruiting students from all sections of the state. By limiting competition between public and private schools because of financial aid to athletes, the TSSAA's policy changes will threaten the future development of great athletes.

The TSSAA, not just students, will suffer because revenue from big games (such as the 1995 football semifinal game between MBA and Brentwood Academy) will be lost. In addition, private schools will have more opportunity to lure players away from public schools. Finally, the schools themselves will be hurt. Traditional rivalries between public and private schools will be destroyed. For example, the rivalry between MBA and Ovation in basketball will be limited to special tournaments. The TSSAA will still not receive any of the proceeds from these limited areas.

It seems apparent that the split is in the worst interests of the TSSAA, the schools, and their students. Tennessee has been known for its consistency in athletic prowess across the state. Unfortunately, this statement may not be as true in a few years.

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Alumni Perform Play

by Greg LaVigne

During the summer, a handful of founding Civil War Set members reunited to perform Fredrick Knott's *Wait Until Dark* at MBA for old time's sake. After arduous late-night rehearsals and unfortunate recasting, performances took place in MBA's own Paschal Theater on the first and second weekends in August. Stephen Hunt, Bill Siesser, Paul Thompson, Christy Collier, and others performed under the direction of Will O'Haire.

In a nutshell, the plot is as follows: A child's doll, filled with uncut heroin, falls into the hands of unsuspecting photographer Sam Hendrix (played by Bradley Coburn). Sam leaves town on business and leaves the doll with his blind wife, Suzie Hendrix (Collier). Meanwhile, two conmen, Carlo and Menudo (Hunt and Thompson, respectively), are hired by Harry Root (Siesser) to seize the doll. Suzie catches on to the plot and does everything in her power to keep the doll out of the bad guys' hands. The finale is a ton-to-toe seessaw game of power between Root and Suzie.

The production was excellent, because those involved had been well trained by their experience at MBA. The set was good by MBA's standards. The lighting, especially at the play's climax, accentuated the suspense. The actors took to their roles well. Siesser and Hunt were phenomenal, apparently through a lot of effort and character development. I must admit, however, that two actors were a tad disappointing in their performances. Christy Collier, a capable performer, appeared very superficial in her portrayal and mimicked Audie Hepburn's method in the film *Wait Until Dark*. Another more than capable actor who was not quite up to par was Paul Thompson, though the problem was probably due to the "unfortunate recasting" referred to earlier. His character was supposed to be an intimidating menace near the climax, a role which isn't exactly Paul's forte. Nevertheless, as a whole, the play was superb, and I hope this tradition of MBA producing plays at MBA is kept. I know this year's senior actors are already planning their reunion piece.

Golf swings forward

by Andrew Mazzoni

The 1996 MBA Golf season has officially arrived, and the Big Red has hopes of improving on last year's finish at State. According to Coach Caldwell, "This year's team has tremendous potential, and has the potential to be the best team since the '92 team that finished 3rd in the State." The golf team is led by Brandt Snedeker, Morgan Hiltnermeyer, Matt Wallace, James Greek, and Noble Judy. The Big Red opened its season at the Early Bird Invitational, finishing tied for seventh. M.B.A. also swam off to an undefeated start in the first five regular matches of the year. The best start for the Big Red golf team supplies momentum which may propel them past arch-rival Ryan to a region crown. Ryan is the main threat to MBA's region hopes, due to the loss of numerous seniors from other area schools. With the return of three starters, the emergence of several newcomers, and the unmatched motivational skills of Coach Caldwell, MBA hopes to have the region crown and an improvement in the State Tournament at the end of the season.

Senior Requests

Requests granted:

- Use of the current Junior parking lot
- Access to elevators in Back House of the State is encouraged
- Senior representatives may attend faculty meetings
- Continental lunch every other Friday
- Casual dress days one a month (Fridays preferably) to help fund Project Graduation
- Senior class meetings at the end of each quarter
- Wooden bleachers in basketball gym for students only
- Seniors allowed to sit first, outside, and with faculty
- Seniors allowed to prepare for AP exams at home the first day before the test
- College Room as a study hall for seniors

Requests denied:

- Monday after-noon office services at home
- Work assignments received before hand
- Seniors allowed to read to attend 4th year
- No activity periods unless previously requested

Headmaster, on campus in new in during the school day.

Seniors attendance at 2nd semester work meetings not required.

- Seniors released up to 2 periods for 2nd semester

- Seniors allowed to wear jeans, shorts, etc. every other Friday

- Seniors may borrow MBA patchwork for Homecoming and Commencement

Requests postponed (under consideration)

- Seniors on PL given 2 days of Headmaster's list privileges per quarter

- A donation from the seniors to help fund senior-approved events

(if funds available at present)

- Senior room, including some of the list:

- Ping-Pong table
- Television set
- Fridge
- Kettle
- Telephone
- Refrigerator
- Microwave
- Furniture
- Dishwasher
- Stove

list to be considered in the Fall

Tillman joins MBA

by Clay Hamblan

When the position of athletic director became open, Jamie Tillman was cautious about applying for the job. Tillman was the athletic director at Belmont University, which made the move to the NCAA this year. Nevertheless, he felt he had always felt called to be a teacher. I really wanted to be a teacher again and the lure of MBA was just too great.

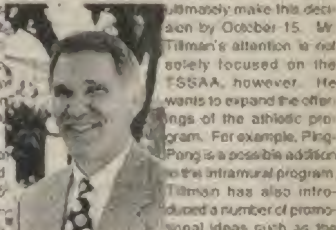
Tillman is no stranger to MBA. He taught and coached at MBA from '66-'73. He was head baseball coach, freshman football coach, and a basketball assistant. In '72, Tillman led the Big Red to the State Championship. Mr. Regen, an outfielder on that team, reflects on Tillman's leadership: "He related to the players real well. He was also really thorough... He kept a scouting report on every hitter."

In 1975 Mr. Tillman began a twelve year career in Tennessee Pipe and

Supply. Before accepting the position at Belmont, Tillman began his own sporting goods store.

As Tillman becomes athletic director at MBA, he faces the controversial TSSAA split. Mr. Gick will ultimately make this decision by October 15. Mr. Tillman's attention is not solely focused on the TSSAA, however. He wants to expand the offerings of the athletic program. For example, Ping-Pong is a possible addition to the intramural program.

Tillman has also introduced a number of promotional ideas such as the "lucky number" ticket stub at football games and the ten-thousand dollar Frisbee toss. In addition, Tillman plans to install new brick dugouts and a new net back stop at the Forehand-Bennett Baseball Field. Along with his athletic responsibilities, Coach Tillman looks forward to teaching Math IV and to building relationships with the student body.



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130th year of football begins

by Matthew Berry

After a disappointing loss to BA in last year's Semifinals, the Big Red Varsity regrouped during the off-season. With the loss of only six starters, MBA returns a strong nucleus of seniors dedicated to only one thing: reaching the Clinic Bowl.

Under the guidance of Coach Simms, MBA players made huge gains in the weight room. The team went from having one player bench-pressing 300 pounds in '95 to having over nine accomplishing the feat this year. Along with improvements in the weight room, the Big Red underwent a transformation on both the offensive and defensive lines. Coach Caudill improved and updated MBA's blocking schemes, and Coach Brown was brought in from Dickson County to



Fulmer blitzes the Irish defense

regroup the Big Red's defensive front.

MBA opened its season against the highly touted Green Wave of Gallatin. After receiving the kickoff on the four-yard line, the MBA offense proceeded to take the ball 96 yards, capping it off

with a 23-yard scamper by Max Fuller. MBA's defense also started well by forcing the Green Wave to go three and out on their first possession. After receiving the punt, the Big Red offense picked up where it left off, driving the ball back into Gallatin territory.

As Max Fuller plunged in from the one, scoring his second touchdown of the quarter, MBA's defensive unit continued to play well, stopping the Gallatin attack, but the offense sputtered for the remainder of the first half. Even so, MBA had a 14-point lead going into the 2nd half. The defense came out of the locker room filling oil can cylinders, forcing Gallatin to punt or turn the ball over on every possession.

The Big Red offense capitalized on MBA's defensive stops. John Markham booted a field goal, Leland Prevost ran for a seventy-six yard touchdown, and Blake Sloan connected with Michael Eskind for a seventy-nine yard score. At the end of the third quarter, the outcome was all but decided as MBA led 31-0. Although the shut-out was spoiled, it could take nothing away from MBA's defensive performance. Gallatin did not complete a

single pass and was only able to muster 113 yards on the ground behind a huge offensive line.

In week two the Clarksville Northeast Eagles invaded Tommy Owen Stadium. Led by talented backs Travis Stephens and Tim Terry, the Eagles presented the Big Red with possibly its biggest challenge of the regular season. MBA's defense played well throughout the game, holding the Eagle's star runningbacks in check, but the Big Red offense sputtered in the fourth quarter when three turnovers and a failed fourth down conversion closed the book on MBA hopes. Although MBA is no longer in the driver's seat of region 6-5A because of the loss, hopes of a state championship are still alive. On Friday, September 13th, MBA travels to Hunter's Lane for a game which MBA must win to have a chance of winning the region.

CC flooded with recruits

Russell Taber

After losing the Region crown for the first time in fourteen years last November, MBA's cross country team hopes to rebound this year. With only two runners returning from last year's top seven, David Dean and Colin Bonfiglio, the team's chances may seem slim at first glance. However, a large number of new runners have joined the team. A slew of new seniors, such as Raleigh Harwell, Russell Taber, Joe Montgomery, Chris Naibantyan, and Joe Hils, have joined veteran seniors Phillip Zimmerman and Lee Hampton. Talented underclassmen Mark Butch, Michael North, Preston Bottomy, and Hunter Verner have been joined by Keith Bruno, sprinter Michael Higgins, David Pruitt, and Adam Johnson. Mason Guffie and William Lee, who finished 1st and 2nd in HVAC cross country last year, also join the team. In addition, John Hart, a junior, has traded the purple and red of Father Ryan for the cardinal and silver of MBA. Unfortunately, Hart will be unable to compete in varsity meets for one year due to TSSAA rules governing transfers. With the addition of many underclassmen, MBA has a very deep team this year with much potential for growth.

Coming off a successful training camp in Grundy County (Sewanee) during the mid-August heat, MBA

looks to be in good shape. Coach Pruitt notified the team that it was the school's first camp in which each runner finished every workout. Although the team had a very successful camp, there will be stiff competition throughout the season from teams such as Father Ryan and McGowan. Most of the runners who composed Father Ryan's region winning team return this year for the Fighting Irish. Ryan seniors Kuchy, Contreras, and Foster will make Ryan strong. However, Ryan has only five very good runners, so a mid-season injury could severely affect their chances. At MBA's first meet, the Drake Memorial Invitational, our team had a solid showing. Six runners finished the grueling three mile course in under eighteen minutes. Dean finished fourth overall, followed by Taber, Lee, Verner, and Bonfiglio.

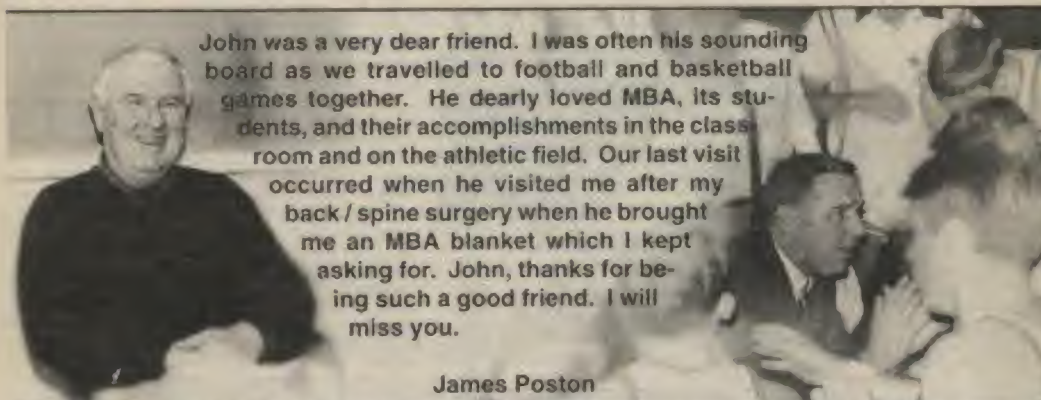
Because of the stiff competition, student support at races is very important. Cross Country may not be as exciting to watch as football, but one can catch some of the sun's last rays before winter! With hard work, determination, luck, and crowd support, it seems inevitable that MBA has a strong chance of regaining the region crown.

PHOTO BY JON MURPHY
MBA'S FIRST CAMP IN WHICH EACH
RUNNER FINISHED EVERY WORKOUT

NEELY COBLE Co.

Truck Center:
Used Sales & Parts Dept.
319 Fesslers Lane
Nashville, TN 37210
244-8900

Body Shop
1130 Polk Avenue
Nashville, TN 37210
255-3141



John was a very dear friend. I was often his sounding board as we travelled to football and basketball games together. He dearly loved MBA, its students, and their accomplishments in the classroom and on the athletic field. Our last visit occurred when he visited me after my back/spine surgery when he brought me an MBA blanket which I kept asking for. John, thanks for being such a good friend. I will miss you.

James Poston



He was the architect of MBA's competing at the highest levels, and of our programs having a lot of integrity and a willingness for the traditional program to have new dimensions to it. A greater legacy will be that he was respected among the teachers and his peers across the state. When I went to meetings with him, it was clear they liked Johnny Bennett, it was clear they felt this person had a lot of integrity... he was like a trusted counselor to me.

Beauregard Glala



That smile. We will always remember that big, toothy, open-hearted smile. But Coach Bennett was more than a big smile. He made promises that he would keep. Although he was not an alumnus, Coach Bennett embraced all that MBA stands for as much as anyone.

Al Fuller, Class of '96

When Coach Bennett laughed, it was like the whole room was shaking. He had this jolly old laugh when he heard a good joke or when someone told a funny story. Everyone who knew him knew exactly what I'm talking about. He was a man of honor. He was a man who was coach, and I'm honored to have had an opportunity to play on a field that now so rightfully bears his name in his honor.

Chris Fridrich, Class of '85

I had just been hired by Mr. Carter and was asked to observe a few classes before I began teaching in the fall of that year. I was one of the fortunate to have seen Coach Bennett in action in his classroom. His booming voice carried throughout Carter Hall as he emphasized how to find the "apothem" of a regular polygon. Coach Bennett could make quite an impression!

Floyd Elliott

If I had to name his greatest legacies, his love for athletics, his ardent obsession with MBA's success in athletics, and his love for the kids.

Ken Downey, Class of '82



I had the unique privilege of being one of Coach Bennett's students, basketball players, and in more recent years, his personal physician. In each of those capacities, I learned to appreciate what an outstanding gentleman Coach Bennett was. He had a profound impact on me during my formative years as a student at Montgomery Bell. His instruction both in the classroom and on the basketball court helped me become a more well-rounded individual and better prepared to meet the challenges of adulthood.

John Gibson, Class of '70

"His loyalty, love for this school and its students - that's his legacy. It's carried over to people... who now teach and have been around him..."

Damon Regen, Class of '72

His greatest legacy was his love of students. It was obvious as athletic director he wasn't just interested in praise himself as he was in achieving the pride that they built in themselves, and the tradition they built for this school.



Tom Weaver, Class of '65

"I am starting my seventh year at MBA, and it will be hard to get used to not having my good friend... Coach Bennett's warmth and sincerity never wavered in the way he supported and belittled me while I have been a teacher and a coach at MBA. I know that Coach Bennett loved MBA... I will forever miss him."

Pat Woolsey

The Bell Ringer staff thanks Mr. Woolsey, Mrs. Garrett, Mr. Poston, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Weaver, Mr. Regen, Mr. Downey, Mr. Fridrich, Dr. Gibson, Mr. Tillman, Mr. Fuller, and Mr. Glala for their help in the production of this page.